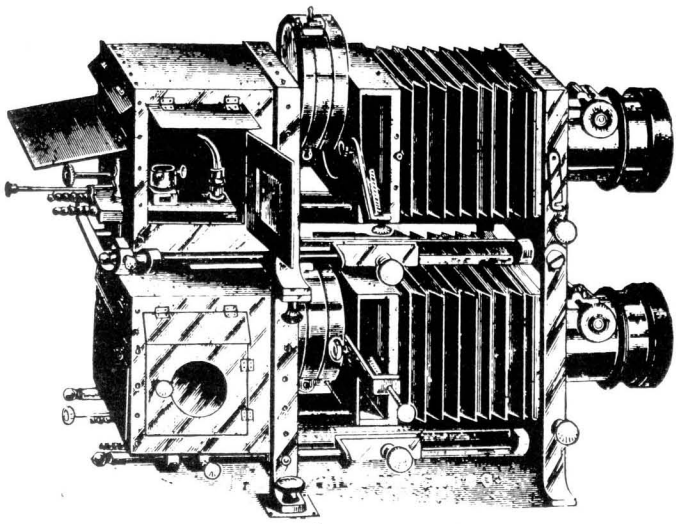


THE IMPROVED "BOSTON IDEAL."

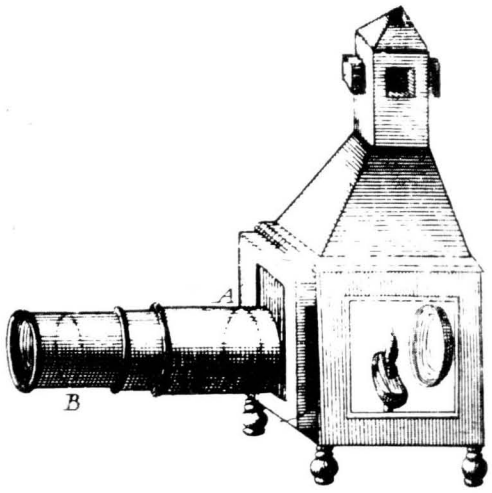
The Magic Lantern Bulletin

Vol. VII, No. 3
November, 1985

Good news first! The results of a mass mailing to members tardy with their 1985 dues was a huge success and we're back up to a healthy membership level of close to 90 (with more coming in every day). We like to think that this was due in no small measure to the impact of our last issue, a massive 72-page facsimile edition of "The Magic Lantern," America's premier 19th-century lantern journal. I want to thank all the members who took the time to write me about it and to assure them (and you) that the reprint project will continue. Each year, paid-up members will receive the latest addition to the reprint collection as a regular part of their subscription to the **Magic Lantern Bulletin** until the entire run has been reproduced. It should go without saying (but warrants mention) that it would be impossible for a society of our size to undertake such a project were it not for the generosity and skill of fellow-member and printer, Richard Evans. Thanks again, Dick.

The eagle-eyed among you might notice a change in typography. In an effort to cut back on the time (and time is money) and labor involved in producing the **Bulletin**, we're investigating the possibility of layout via computer. This is our first clumsy attempt at the task,

but future issues should look even better with the help of a laser printer (sounds like something out of **Star Wars**, doesn't it?) and an elaborate desk-top publishing program. For the electronically curious, this is all being accomplished on Apple's Macintosh computer; I'd like to hear your reactions.



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Just when you think a story is over, another bit--or flood!--of information comes across your desk that adds another chapter. Volume VI, Nos. 3 & 4 of the **Bulletin** (a special double-issue) featured a column entitled "Lantern Readings: A Contest," in which readers were invited to contribute an original poem to accompany a set of live model illustrated slides, "Story of A Coast Guardsman," issued by Williams, Brown & Earle (Phildelphia). The following issue published Bob Woodward's winning entry. A few days ago, I received a letter from David Henry in London. He supplies the following:

"The set originated as illustrations of the poem by Clement Scott. The photographs were taken in London by William York--of York & Son--and first issued there in 1896. (Williams, Brown & Earle were distributors.) There were originally twelve slides in the set. The missing slide is that originally numbered 2. Your numbering, after the first slide, is thus one out of step with the original (e.g. your #11 = original #12, etc.). As you doubtless know, the slides were reproduced reversed in the **Bulletin**. This doesn't make any difference, but can be seen to be the case from the word "Coastguard" in the hat band visible in (your) slides #7 and #10--just legible in the reproduction."

Thanks to David who also provided a complete list of the slides in the set and a photocopy of Scott's original poem (both reproduced below).

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THE STORY OF A COASTGUARDSMAN

1. The dangerous Cornish coast
2. Women who bend the knee
3. A party of "Trippers"
4. Up came the sea and trapped him
5. To the cliffs he began to mount
6. Where he held with a cry for a second
7. "I am that man, God willing!"
8. Bind it about my waist
9. He swooped to his prey like an eagle
10. The coastguard seized him
11. Till it dragged the burdened hero
12. But the women, they crowded round him

1.
They sing their songs and their lifeboat lays, and gossip of guest to host
Is of wreckage wild, in the winter time, round the dangerous Cornish coast;
There are plenty of yarns of the sailors, and of fishermen out at sea,
There are tales of the lighthouse-keepers, and of women who bend the knee

2.
When their mates are away in the storm-time, and the cottage is left to the roar
Of the hurricane lashing the surf to foam, and screaming about the shore;
But best of all the tales that ever I heard, to make me think better of men
Who cling in their lives for duty--it happened--you ask me when?
On a wonderful summer's evening, just as holiday-time began;
It had for its scene old Cornwall--its hero a Coastguardsman!

3.
A party of "trippers" had ventured to visit the rocks and the caves,
Where the sea-birds find their houses, and ignorant folks their graves;
You may search for wild adventure on the sea-coast south and north,
But for beauty, just travel by Truro to the village of Perranporth.
It was there on this summer evening, on the beach as the daylight died,
That a wandering, thoughtless fellow was caught at the turn of the tide;

4.
Up came the sea and trapped him, cutting the ground from his feet;
He rushed, but he couldn't go onward--then back, there was no retreat!
Up came the sea still closer--was it death? Not a second to count--

5.
Then setting his teeth at the danger, to the cliff he began to mount.
Tearing the turf and the grasses, and scaring the sea-bird's nest
Clinging with feet and fingers, and bruising his arms and breast;

6.
At last, with a desperate struggle, he lifted his life to a stone,
There he held with a cry for a second, suspended in air alone!
Once more death barred his passage; and his terrified face turned grey,
For the ledge of the rock he clung to was crumbling slowly away!
"Where is the man for a rescue?" so the cry of agony ran,

7.
"I am that man, God willing!" said Regan, the Coastguardsman!

Then followed a terrible silence, a horror that might be felt,
For the village was emptied of women, who muttered their prayers and knelt;
They could see the eyes of the shivering man, with the agonised face turned grey,
As stone after stone, from his safety ledge, kept slowly crumbling away!

8.
"Bring me a rope," said Regan, "and bind it about my waist;
Look at that wretched fellow! In a second he'll fall! Make haste!
Keep the cord tight in your hands, mates--there, tighter so, and stiff;
Now wait till I give the signal! then haul me over the cliff.
Why do you stand there staring? I'll save him, lads, if I can.
I die, I have done my duty," said Regan, the Coastguardsman!

9.
He swooped to his prey like an eagle, as they lowered with bated breath,
This man, with his brave life given to a brother condemned to death.
The silence grew more awful, and the agony piled on the lip
Of the women and men who waited--till at last, with a mighty grip,

10.
The man of the Coastguard seized him, and tightened his arms around
This prize he had risked his life for--then, searching for safety ground,
They swung from the ledge together, for the rope was taught and stiff,

11.
Till it dragged the burdened hero to the arms of the crowd on the cliff!

12.
There are times when the heart's too full, sir, for even our English cheers,
But the women, they crowded around him with kisses, and prayers, and tears!
So tell it about from south to north, proclaim it where you can;
Go spread it forth from Perranporth--this tale of a Coastguardsman!--

Clement Scott

***

A rousing tale, that! But no better than that which follows: a continuation of Alice and Joe Koch's stirring adventures stalking the wild lantern in Australia, a review of Ruth Hayes' newest flip-book, and the latest installment of Bob Woodward's never-ending (and eagerly anticipated) magic lantern bibliography. Plus a little bit of this and a little bit of that. Our holiday issue should appear (belatedly, as tradition demands) sometime in January. We have some splendid articles in store for that one, but have hung out the "Stories Wanted" shingle for our 1986 issues. In addition to our reprint issue, the second "big" edition will be devoted to the Temperance Movement and we invite you to submit original pieces for that, preferably illustrated with clear black and white photos or line- drawings. Shorter articles on any subject (amazing "finds", lantern and pre-cinema history, restoration and collection, or whatever your little heart desires) will find a happy home in the two smaller '86 issues.

Let me be the first (or last, depending on when I finally send this out) to wish you and yours a happy Thanksgiving.

THE UNIVERSAL LANTERN (PART II):
A TRIP TO NEW ZEALAND & AUSTRALIA
By Joe Koch

Upon arriving in Sydney, Australia, I called Warren Smythe on the phone and set up a visit. On a Sunday, Warren met us at the train in Auburn and drove us to his home where we met his wife and three children. Upon entering, we smelled the aroma of a hot lantern--it turned out that his only bulb had burned out and he was forced to cancel the show he planned! We did look through Warren's collection, the major portion of which is devoted to his main interest, stereo cards. He has cabinets full of them. We visited with the family for a few hours, discussed U.S. schools with his children, and had a most delightful visit.

On April 5th we met Allan Osborne and it was off to his friend Rosalyn's apartment for cake and tea and a jolly good conversation. We talked of magic lanterns, collectors, and old theater equipment before leaving for Allan's rented house where we had a great time looking at his collection. Among the items on view were a megalethoscope, three Edison kinetoscopes, many carbon arc projectors, kinoras, broadsides, posters, books, and a whole host of magic lanterns. There were varied types of illuminants, also. Allan had an intriguing non-optical fortune-telling machine called "Puss In Boots." He really needs a larger house to store all his material (but so do all of us!). We said our good-byes as we had to catch our plane to Adelaide.

Gary Scroop met us at our Adelaide motel room and we went to his flat. We spent some time talking about putting on magic lantern shows, facilities, working with other people (he uses a live piano player and singer), and various other aspects of showmanship. The productions he puts on are quite magnificent. The local T.V. station taped part of his show for use in their programming and Gary had a five-minute segment of his show on videotape that he shared with us. In it, he was assisted by his son, Gary, and employed a vertical biunial lantern with 500 watt halogen bulbs, cooled by a custom fan. The participants were all in period costume and the scenery was authentic as well. The television people did a very nice job--the lanternist, singer and piano player were featured in cameo effects. The color and sound were first-rate. Afterwards, we spent a delightful half-hour looking over Gary's collection. He was bicycle racing the following morning so we called it an evening and returned to our motel. The next day we were off to Alice Springs.

Reflecting on our journey, it seemed as though there were not that many people in Australia and New Zealand interested in the lantern. Bill Main seems to be the only private collector in New Zealand and Warren Smythe, Allan Osborne and Gary Scroop seem to be the only serious ones in Australia. There is one other who no one seems to know much about: Harold Burtoft of Concord, New South Wales, Australia. A total of five in a population of eighteen million seems slim indeed.

The pickings are not that good "down under." I spent quite some time looking for lanterns and slides in antique shops and came up with the following prices:

1) 2 lanterns in Levin, New Zealand; one for $50.00 and one for $60.00 (New Zealand dollars);

2) One antique shop in Sydney had about fifty slides, some of which were very nice. On a single slide basis, they wanted $4.00 (Australian); if you took the whole box, they

were about $2.00 (Australian) apiece; and

3) In a Red Barn near Moore Park (also in Sydney), was a collection of antique shops. One had slides that were too high for me to consider: 8 lever slides for $125.00 each (Australian), 17 Boer War colored toy slides ($395.00 Austalian), 65 (3 1/4" x 3 1/4") plus 3 wood-mounted fairy tale, 5 school slides, a few North Pole Eskimo scenes, and a number of astronomical slides for $95.00 each (Australian).

I was unable to locate any other slides but they must exist somewhere; perhaps I was looking in the wrong places. We were on a tight schedule, so we felt fortunate to have at least a little time to spare to visit our fellow members. All of the people we visited in this article (and that which appeared in **Bulletin** Vol. VII, No. 1) are members of the British Lantern Society. Two are members of the U.S. Society. We had corresponded with most of them and warned them of our impending visit. All were very hospitable to us and we appreciated the chance to get to know them. Each extends his greetings to magic lanternists everywhere.

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FIVE PELICANS FISH: A FLIPBOOK BY RUTH HAYES
A REVIEW
By Larry Rakow

Those of us who have already experienced the creative wonder of "Bodyscape," the satiric wit of "Ron's World," the paranoid glee of "T.V. Dinner," and the downright astonishment of "Frogs In Heat," will be happy to know that flipbook artist Ruth Hayes is at it again, and better than ever. Her latest, a 48-frame movie entitled "Five Pelicans Fish," is evidence of her hightened artistic and conceptual abilities. Ruth manages to both delight and inform at the same time.

Flipping leisurely from back to front, we're witness to a seascape at water level, able to see both above and beneath the waves simultaneously. Two Brown Pelicans (Pelicanus occidentalis) wing their way into the midground and background, swooping from the skies to feed upon a school of fish that have appeared beneath the surface. Suddenly, the foreground is filled by another pelican, dive-bombing for food. (These remarkable birds can aim at a single larger fish or an entire school of smaller fishes by sighting down their beak). Water is sent flying in every direction at its impact, calming by degrees as it surfaces with its meal. During the few seconds it takes to flip through, five pelicans have fed.

What comes as a surprise in Ruth's latest venture is not her control over the medium, but the addition of a text to supplement the pictures. Traditional flipbooks are often pleasant diversions, but this is an exciting departure from the rules. An informative narrative is printed on the blank backs at the top of the flipbook, describing the scene below and encouraging the viewer to regard the book as <u>both</u> a series of static views and a kinetic device. The text describes the habitat and eating habits of Brown Pelicans and concludes with an environmental statement: the pelicans came close to extinction during the 1960's from eating fish polluted by DDT. The 1972 ban on DDT helped their populations revive.

The flipbook itself is slightly larger than usual (3 1/4" x 4 1/2"), beautifully

printed in black and white, and sturdily bound. It is worth every penny of its $3.95 price and is available from Random Motion, 159 Western Avenue W. #484, Seattle, WA 98119.

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MAGIC LANTERN BIBLIOGRAPHY: VI
By Robert H. Woodward

With this installment of the bibliography I exhaust the annotations awaiting publication. Despite repeated invitations during the past few years, few members have contributed to the bibliography, which will quickly fade without support. This installment reflects my own interests--the magic lantern and optical mechanisms in motion picture history and in motion pictures themselves, as well as literary references.

Contributions to the bibliography are welcome. Please check both this and previous installments for form, prepare annotations of magic lantern materials you have in your library or to which you have access, and send them to me at 494 Cheyenne Lane, San Jose, CA 95123.

I. Catalogues

Doyle Auctioneers & Appraisers. Mail-Auction of the Movie Memorabilia of Al Simon. Fishkill, N.Y.: Doyle Auctioneers & Appraisers, (February 1985). Movie-related equipment, described and pictured on pp. 3-6 as well as on front and back covers, includes several magic lanterns. Pages 33-43 list hundreds of coming attraction slides, mostly from the first quarter of this century. The list, alphabetized by movie title, provides the names of three performers, the studio, and, if known, the date. The collection was "previously on loan to the Astoria Motion Picture and Television Foundation" in New York.

II. Books and Articles

Frymer, Murry. "Theater." San Jose Mercury News, 23 September 1983, p. 11D. Frymer notes that most directors have dropped the magic lantern slide commentary in productions of Tennessee Williams' The Glass Menagerie "as being ineffective. Which it is." (See entry about the play in "Magic Lantern Bibliography: IV," December 1983, p. 12.)

Livingstone, David. Travels and Researches in Sth. Africa. London: Herbert Joseph Limited, 1937. In preparing for an expedition on the Chobe River in September 1835, Livingstone packed "a magic lantern, which we found of much service" (p. 92). At Gonya, he wrote, "as elsewhere, (the natives) all petitioned for the magic lantern, and, as it is a good means of conveying instruction, I willingly complied" (p. 101). In the village of Nyamoena, "we regaled our friends with the magic lantern by night..." (p. 122).

London, Jack. Martin Eden. New York: Macmillan, 1909. When Martin Eden, a rough sailor of keen sensibilities, is intoduced into polite society in Chapter I, London makes use of much optical imagery to describe the play of sensations within Martin. As he recalls scenes from his past life, his mind becomes "a vast camera obscura" (p. 4). These "endless pictures" are "phantasmagoria" (p. 4) and, later, "a

thousand pictures" in "the kaleidoscope of memory" (p. 13).

Malamud, Bernard. The Natural. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1965, p. 31. When farm boy Roy Hobbs arrives in Chicago to make his mark as a baseball player, he is not surprised at what he sees. "He had once seen some stereopticon pictures of Chicago and it was a boxed-up ant heap of stone and crumbling wood buildings..."

Mery, Fernand. The Life, History and Magic of the Cat. Trans. by Emma Street. New York: Madison Square Press, Grosset & Dunlap Publishers, 1968. A magic lantern slide--"When the rat is master of the cat..."--is reproduced on p. 81. The scene depicts a rat driving a carriage and using a whip to encourage the two draft cats, one of which, clearly annoyed, is rearing up and turning.

Robinson, David. The History of World Cinema. New York: Stein and Day, 1973. Chapter 1, "Heritage" (pp. 1-20), supplements a succinct history of pre-cinema development with numerous illustrations: Plan of Robert Barker's Panorama of the Battle of Waterloo, 1815; plan of Daguerre's Diorama in Park Square East, London; Polyrama Panoptique, ca. 1850; the magic lantern pictured in Kircher's Ars Magna Lucis et Umbrae; a magic lantern projecting a dioramic print, ca. 1840; English triunial magic lantern, ca. 1890; the phenakistiscope, zoetrope, and praxinoscope. About the magic lantern, p. 6: "The principle is still employed in the cinema projector: in its base form the most elaborate projector is still a magic lantern, while the film and film moving apparatus is a sophisticated equivalent of the simple lantern slide."

Tolstoy, Leo. War and Peace. Trans. by Constance Garnett. New York: The Modern Library, (n.d.), p. 719. (Part Ten, Chapter 24.) As Prince Andrey, on the eve of battle, contemplates his past and thinks about his possible death, "everything that had once occupied him seemed suddenly illumined by a cold, white light, without perspective or outline. His whole life seemed to him like a magic lantern, at which he had been looking through the glass and by artificial light. Now he saw suddenly, without the glass, in the clear light of day, those badly daubed pictures." These "coarsely sketched figures" that once "seemed something splendid and mysterious" are now seen only as "cheating forms."

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A continuation of Bob's bibliography and a membership update will appear in the holiday issue. In closing, we do have an urgent request from former member and now new member, Major Robert Scherer. Bob writes:

"I just returned from Europe where I compiled a complete record (as available) of the Bamforth postcard material. For your information, the vast majority of the postcards produced during the early period (1902-10) were from early Bamforth lantern slides. In addition to compiling a complete research collection and record of all material produced by this firm, I have expanded my research activities to include a complete record of the name and ownership of all Bamforth slide collections in existence (either complete or partial). Please, if you have any material relating to this subject, whether complete or incomplete, your cooperation in compiling and recording this information is of invaluable assistance. Send all information to Major Robert W. Scherer, Apartment 3, 5003 E. Colonial Drive, Tampa, FL 33611. Thank you."